

Nutcracker! – The Musical (Pleasance Theatre, London)

By **Mark Taha** - Dec 24, 2015



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The ballet was turned into a cartoon in 1990, now it's become a stage musical with **Nancy Holson** adding words to the music. It goes from the present day – Marie and Uncle Drosselmeir reading the story on Christmas Eve – to the story itself, then back and forth.

Princess Pirlipat (also Marie) is born, the Mouse Queen and her family scoff the King's bacon, clockmaker Drosselmeir gets the task of ridding the country of mice but doesn't quite manage it. Mouse Queen Mouseyrink puts a spell on the Princess. It's reversed after an epic fight, but heroic Prince Christian Elias is turned into a nutcracker! The spell is broken in the present day with Marie and the Prince getting together.

The dancing is first rate, worthy of ballet, for example the "ballet battle" between the Prince and his men and the mice. Tschaikovsky's music has been turned into some good songs: *Be Practical*, *Imagination*, *Mouseyrink's Lament* – taken from *Swan Lake*!

Mention should be made particularly of Maria Coyne as Marie and the Princess: beautiful, young, talented and blonde; Kris Webb as Drosselmeir, and Janice Birkett as Mouseyrink.

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